AIR POUCH | CONFIDENTIAL (Security Classification) | DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

573

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

714.00/12-2153

FROM : AMEMBASSY, GUATEMALA — DESP. NO. 533

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON. — DATE: December 21, 1953

REF : Embassy Despatch 460, November 30, 1953

714.00 ARA 64 EARP CIA

DEC 23 1953

For Dept. Use Only	ACTION: ARA-4 RECD: 12/28	INFO: X DC/R-2 CAI-6 EUR/X-1 O CIA-7

SUBJECT: Internal Quarrels of Guatemalan Revolutionary Movement Result in Removal of Zapata from Supreme Court.

In a further illustration of the moral and political decay of what the Communists call the "petit bourgeois" Guatemalan Revolutionary parties (Embassy Despatch 460, November 30), Jaime DIAZ Rozzotto, Secretary General of President Arbenz' Executive Office, and Virgilio ZAPATA Mendía, Associate Justice of the Guatemalan Supreme Court, on December 18 broke into the headquarters of the leftist party Renovación Nacional sub-machine guns in hand to drive out a faction which sought to oust them from the party leadership and later during the day the Guatemalan Congress passed a motion censuring Diaz Rozzotto and removing Zapata from the Supreme Court for "notorious bad conduct." The incident was of the type which adds to the disciplined Guatemalan Communist party's carefully cultivated reputation as the "most honest" of the leftist parties supporting the Arbenz Administration.

The events of December [illegible] began at about noon when a majority of the Renovación Nacional Executive Committee, according to the newspaper accounts, took over the party headquarters and proceeded to vote the removal of Diaz Rozzotto from the RN Secretary Generalship, Deputy Jaime BARRIOS Archila from the RN Secretariat and Zapata from the RN Political Committee, and to expel them from the party on the grounds of "dictatorial practices," "bad administration," and errors in their political lines. They then elected a new Executive Committee headed by Deputy Hector FION Garma as Secretary General and Roberto GIRON Lemus, First Vice President of Congress last year, as Secretary for Organization.

As the session of the Executive Committee was breaking up, Diaz Rozzotto, Barrios Archila and Zapata drove up in an official Cadillac and, surrounded by a group of their followers, jumped out with sub-machine guns to contest their removal. Diaz Rozzotto and Zapata met Deputy Alejandro Revolorio, a leader of the insurrectionary group, and threatened him with a sub-machine gun. A fist fight broke out between the two factions in which Revolorio was hit on the head by a pistol butt and Diaz Rozzotto's group gained control of the party headquarters before a dozen policemen were able to intervene and restore order.

JCHill:cs
REPORTER

CONFIDENTIAL

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

Central Files

714.00/12-2153

CONFIDENTIAL FILE

LWC

2/9/84

That evening, Fión Garma, the insurrectionists' Secretary General, introduced a motion in Congress to censure Diaz Rozzotto and to remove Zapata from the Supreme Court, to which he was elected last February when Congress removed all but one of the Supreme Court Justices for alleged incompetence in raising a question as to the constitutionality of a provisional Agrarian Reform Law. In an unusual alliance, the Communist deputies and the anti-Communist deputies opposed the motion on the grounds that there had been no investigation into the facts but the revolutionary parties nonetheless enacted the motion.

The situation at present is confused. Diaz Rozzotto's partisans are in control of party headquarters and have "expelled" the insurrectionists from the party. They have the apparent support of the Communists whose newspaper Tribuna Popular is giving them favorable publicity. The Civil Registrar, Humberto HERNANDEZ Cobos, himself a member of the RN, has prudently not passed on the petition of the insurrectionist Executive Committee for registry on the rolls of legal political parties. The insurrectionists have the apparent support of Congress and newspapers report that high officials of the Administration are "disgusted" at Diaz Rozzotto's conduct. It is thus still a question which faction will control the RN.

Whatever the eventual outcome, the incident cannot fail but to lower further the prestige of the "revolutionary" parties to the benefit of the Communist Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo (PGT) which is now the only Administration party which has not been shaken by a major scandal in the last few months.

FOR THE AMBASSADOR

William L. Krieg
Counselor of Embassy